

## IDENTIFYING THE USE OF READING LEARNING STRATEGIES IN RELATION TO LEARNING STYLES

**Melati Dwi Anda Syaputri, Ag. Bambang Setiyadi, Sudirman**  
**melatidwianda@yahoo.com**

Tujuan penelitian ini untuk mengetahui tipe belajar dan strategi yang digunakan siswa berdasarkan tipe belajarnya dalam kemampuan membaca bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dan dilaksanakan pada kelas 1 SMAN 3 yang berjumlah 32 siswa. Untuk mengumpulkan data, peneliti memberikan dua kuesioner untuk mengetahui tipe dan strategi belajar dalam membaca. Data dianalisis dengan *ANOVA*. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa (1) siswa yang tergolong kinestetik berjumlah 15 siswa (46,88%), visual 9 siswa (28,12%) dan auditori 8 siswa (25%), (2) siswa visual lebih sering menggunakan strategi kognitif, siswa kinestetik dan auditori lebih sering menggunakan strategi sosial dalam membaca. Seluruh siswa menggunakan strategi metakognitif sebagai pilihan kedua dalam membaca. Oleh karena itu, dengan mengetahui tipe dan strategi belajar siswa, guru dapat lebih kreatif dalam memilih metode belajar yang tepat karena mereka mengetahui bagaimana karakter siswa dan yang mereka butuhkan.

This research was aimed at finding out learning styles and the strategies used by learners with different learning styles in learning English reading. This research was a quantitative study and was conducted to 32 learners in first grade of SMAN 3. In collecting data, the researcher gave two questionnaires to measure learning styles and reading learning strategies. The data were analyzed using *ANOVA*. The results showed that (1) the learners which were group under kinesthetic was found 15 learners (46,88%), visual was 9 learners (28,12%) and auditory was 8 learners (25%), (2) visual learners mostly used cognitive strategy, kinesthetic learners and auditory learners mostly used social strategy in learning reading. Then, all learners used metacognitive as the second preference of strategy. Thus, by identifying learning styles and strategies, the teacher will be more creative in choosing appropriate methods in learning process because they know what characteristics that the learners have and what they need.

**Keywords:** learning strategies, learning styles, reading

## INTRODUCTION

Learning styles of learners usually influence the learning process. Based on my experiences, not all the teachers considered their learners' learning style. The teachers usually taught the learners in a common way, for example they only explained the materials by reading the book or writing the explanation on the whiteboard. In addition, some teachers only used the techniques based on their styles without considering their learners' styles in processing the knowledge in learning process. However, the learning process sometimes was not effective.

Learning style is the way in which a person learns and gains knowledge or skills. It is commonly recognized that people learn and process information in very different ways. For example, auditory learners tend to attain information by discussing and listening. As another example, for visual style, the learners learn by interpreting charts, graph, and pictures. While in kinesthetic style, the learners are more accepting learning based on behavior such as touch, feel, see, and listen (DePorter and Hernacky, 1999). Learning styles can be very helpful and beneficial to the learners in becoming more focused and attentive learners that will increase educational process.

Not only learning styles, but also learning strategies are needed in order to learn more effectively in learning process. Wenden and Rubin (1990) state that language learning strategy refers to language learning behaviors that learners actually engage in to learn and regulate the learning of second or foreign language. She also points out that a learner who uses learning strategy becomes

more effective learner. Unfortunately, most of learners do not use the strategies effectively in learning, so that sometimes learners find the difficulty in the learning process. However, in learning English reading, each learner may have various learning strategies. Different learner may use different learning strategies. There are three main categories of language learning strategies that can be applied in learning reading: cognitive, metacognitive, and social (Setiyadi, 2011). The cognitive processes include all activities related to mental processing (Setiyadi, 2011). However, Wenden and Rubin (1990) quote that metacognitive learning strategies involve thinking about the learning process, planning for learning, monitoring of learning while it is taking place and self-evaluation of learning after the learning activity. Furthermore, Stratton and Hays (1988) define social psychology as the branch of psychology which is particularly concerned with the nature and form of social interaction and how people come to influence one another's behavior. Based on the explanations above, this present study was aimed at finding out learning styles in learning English as foreign language and the strategies used by learners with different learning styles in learning English reading.

## **METHOD**

This research was a quantitative study. The population of this research was the first grade of SMAN 3 Bandar Lampung in academic year 2014/2015. There were seven classes of the first grade in that school. The number of the learners of each class was about 32 learners. The researcher chose one class as the sample. In collecting data, the researcher gave two kinds of questionnaires. The first

questionnaire was about learning styles and the second questionnaire was about learning strategies in reading. In analyzing the data, the researcher used *One way ANOVA*.

There were three kinds of learning styles, visual, auditory, and kinesthetic style. The styles were compared with the means of the three kinds of learning strategies, cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies in order to determine whether each main effect and the interaction effect were statically significant. The validity of the questionnaire was seen from content validity. It meant that between the items of the questionnaire and the theory of the expert must be the same. The questionnaire items were related to the theory proposed by DePorter and Hernacky (1999) about learning styles. Besides, the researcher used *inter-rater* to prove that the content, face, and construct were suitable with the questionnaire items.

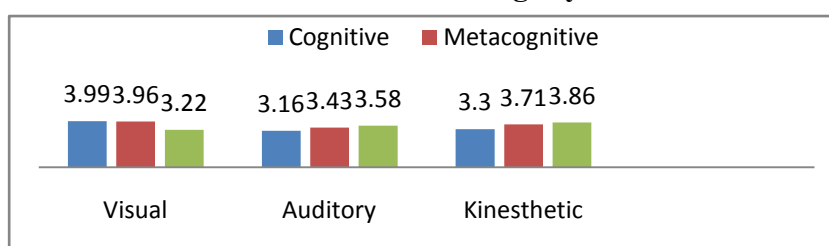
Based on the result of validity judgment, the item questionnaires were modified according to the feedback acknowledged by the experts to make the items simpler and shorter in order to make the research participants comprehend well. After that, the reviewers agreed if the questionnaire had good content validity. The contents were already related to the purpose of the questionnaire. But, there were some statements revised. Overall, there were no deleted items. It was assumed that the questionnaire test is valid. Besides, the second questionnaire, Language Learning Strategy Questionnaire or the LLSQ developed by Setiyadi (2011) had been standardized so it had good validity.

## RESULTS

Referring to the result of questionnaire, the researcher divided the learners into three types of learning styles. By analyzing the data of questionnaire, the researcher could classify the learners into three kinds of learning styles, for examples were the learners belonged to kinesthetic learners which were found 15 kinesthetic learners (46,88%), 9 visual learners (28,12%) and 8 auditory learners (25%) from 32 samples.

Furthermore, referring to the result of ANOVA, learners, with visual learning style, auditory learning style, and kinesthetic learning style, used different kinds of reading learning strategies. Visual learners mostly used cognitive strategy with mean 3.99 and standard deviation .11. Kinesthetic learners and auditory learners mostly used social strategy with mean 3.86 and SD .24 and auditory learners with mean 3.58 and SD .34. In addition, visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners used metacognitive strategy as the second preference.

**Figure 1. Means Plot of the Use of Learning Strategy in Reading in Relation to Learners' Learning Styles**



## DISCUSSIONS

The learners used their senses to take in information or knowledge, they seemed to have preferences in how they learnt best. In this study on learning style, every

learner had their own characteristics in learning process based on their style. The findings are discussed below.

### **A. Visual Learners**

Visual learners assimilated information most effectively by reading or seeing something (Feinstein, 2006). If learners selected dominantly of A in the questionnaire, it means that generally learners learn well from seeing visual aids such as words in book, on the whiteboard, and in workbooks. For example, there were some questions in the questionnaire of learning styles:

When I operate new equipment, I generally:

- a) read the instructions first**
- b) listen to an explanation from someone who has used it before
- c) go ahead, I can figure it out as I use it

Moreover, as DePorter and Hernacky (1999) cited that there were some characteristics of the visual learners. *The learners preferred information to be presented using visual aids, required explanations of diagram, graphs, or visual directions, could better understand a news article by reading about it in the paper than by listening to the radio, and took numerous detailed notes.* Referring to the statements of DePorter and Hernacky (1999) above and identifying the questionnaire answers of learning styles, the researcher identified that the visual learners usually remembered and understood information and instructions better if they read the materials. They did not need as much oral explanation as auditory learners, and they could often learn alone with a book. They should take notes of lesson and oral directions if they wanted to remember the information. As visual students, they would study better if they used the materials or media that could be seen.

## B. Auditory Learners

The auditory learners usually process information through sound, learn by listening to others, and learn by talking and hearing themselves (Leaver, 1998). If learners selected dominantly of B in the questionnaire, it means that generally learners learn from hearing words spoken and from oral explanations. For example, there were some questions in the questionnaire of learning styles:

When I operate new equipment, I generally:

- a) read the instructions first
- b) listen to an explanation from someone who has used it before**
- c) go ahead, I can figure it out as I use it

Furthermore, the learners were classified into auditory learner if they had the characteristics such as *being able to remember more about a subject through the lecture method with information, explanation, and discussion, did better at academic subject by listening to lectures and tapes as opposed to reading textbook, followed oral directions better than written ones, remembered things best by saying them aloud or repeating words and key points, prefer to listen what they were learning, and acquire knowledge by verbalizing lessons to themselves* (DePorter and Hernacky, 1999). Referring to the statements of DePorter and Hernacky (1999) above and identifying the questionnaire answers of learning styles, the researcher identified that the auditory learners usually remembered information by reading aloud when they were learning new material. They benefited from hearing audio tapes, lectures, and class discussions. They benefited from making tapes to listen to, by explaining to another partner, and conversing with the teachers.

### C. Kinesthetic Learners

The kinesthetic learner needs to be actively (bodily) engaged in the learning process with real world activities and with activities that have meaning to the learner (Feinstein, 2006). If learners selected dominantly of C in the questionnaire test, it means that generally students learn best by experiencing and being involved physically in classroom experiences. For example, there were some questions in the questionnaire of learning styles:

When I operate new equipment, I generally:

- a) read the instructions first
- b) listen to an explanation from someone who has used it before
- c) **go ahead, I can figure it out as I use it**

In addition, the learners were classified into kinesthetic learner if they had the characteristics such as like to *write down or to take notes for visual review, preferred to make posters, physical models, or actual practice and some activities in class, remembered best by writing things down several times, felt very comfortable touching others, spoke with their hands and with gestures, and needed to be active and took frequent breaks* (DePorter and Hernacky, 1999). Referring to the statements of DePorter and Hernacky (1999) above and identifying the questionnaire answers of learning styles, the researcher identified that the kinesthetic learners usually remembered information well when they actively participated in activities in the classroom. A combination of stimulation, for example an audiotape combined with an activity or a written direction combined with an activity, would help them understand new materials. As kinesthetic learners, they better obtained the learning process, information, or



knowledge if they did the activities directly such as writing things down to make it easier to them in understanding the lesson.

Based on the result of ANOVA, the visual learners, who usually assimilate information most effectively by reading or seeing something, more frequently used cognitive strategy in reading. Based on visual characteristics, the learners who used cognitive strategies were seen as mental processes and directly concerned with the processing of information in order to learn. The visual learners used cognitive strategy, they usually connected what they have already known or seen with what they were reading. The learners sometimes thought about what was going to happen and made predictions based on what they had already known and what they had read. However, the examples visual learners tried to understand sentences by analyzing their patterns. They tried to translate word and sometimes try to understand the passage by using general knowledge and experience.

In addition, the auditory learners, who usually process information through sound, learn by listening to others, and learn by talking and hearing themselves, more frequently used social strategy in reading. Based on auditory characteristics, the learners usually learn reading by listening themselves or others. The learners, in using social strategy in reading, might cooperate with other learners to solve reading task or understanding about text. Besides, learners could study reading by involving in social activities liked discussing or working together with peers. As the examples, the auditory learners solved the reading passage by listening to

teacher explanation and discuss with the teachers about the text, read aloud the text while trying to understand the passage or listen to friends who read aloud the passage, and sometimes join in a discussion with peers.

Besides, same as auditory learners, the kinesthetic learners, who usually needs to be actively (bodily) engaged in the learning process with real world activities and with activities that have meaning to the learner, more frequently used social strategy in reading. Based on kinesthetic characteristics, the learners usually used social strategies like cooperate with other learners to solve reading task or understanding about text. Besides, learners could study reading by involving in social activities liked discussing or working together with peers. Then, in understanding the reading task, kinesthetic learners liked to move and join in the real activities. They liked to discuss a lot could be with peers or teachers. As the examples, the learners solved the reading task by discussing in a small group, did the real activities while reading the procedure text, and solved the reading passage by discussing with teachers.

In addition, all learners used metacognitive strategies as the second choice in their learning reading. However, Wenden and Rubin (1990) cited that metacognitive learning strategies refer to knowledge above cognition or executive control or self-management through such processes as planning, monitoring, and evaluating. Learners with metacognitive learning strategies can make plan for their studies. However, visual learners used metacognitive strategy almost as frequent as using cognitive strategy. They usually used four steps of metacognitive learning

strategy, namely *planning* before learning, *managing* the learning process, *monitoring* the learning process, and *evaluating* what learners had learned.

*Planning* before learning, it meant that in the earlier before reading a passage, visual learners were able to mention what they should and wanted to know about the information stated on the passage. Then, the second step was *managing* the learning process. In this case, the learners managed their own learning in comprehending the text provided. The next step of metacognitive was *monitoring* the learning process. In *monitoring* the learning process the learners focused on their prediction and their comprehension in reading a passage. The last of metacognitive strategy was *evaluating* step. The learners were required to evaluate what they had learned. If the learners could not understand a reading passage, they tried to analyze what difficulty they actually have.

In contrast, the auditory learners only frequently used several strategies of it. For example, auditory learners usually corrected their mistakes by rereading the text (item 12) and picked out key words and repeated them to themselves (item 16). Besides that, the learners sometimes checked and rechecked their understanding after reading a passage (item 14) and then they sometimes tried to be aware of which words or grammar rules gave them the greatest trouble. In this way they could pay special attention to them while they read and practice (item 17). In other words, auditory learners only used *monitoring* and *evaluating* strategy of metacognitive. Furthermore, DePorter and Hernacky (1999) stated that auditory learners had some characteristics such as can remember things best by saying

them aloud or repeating words and key points, and acquire knowledge by verbalizing lessons to themselves. Then, in learning reading, Reid (2005) stated that some people prefer to learn by hearing what they want to learn. They belong to the auditory learning style. To learn, such people will prefer listening to discussions, talking matters over, reading out of texts or making use of e-courses containing audio recordings. Therefore, in using metacognitive strategy, the auditory learners only used some of the strategies of it which were relevant to their behavior in learning process.

In addition, kinesthetic learners only frequently used several strategies of metacognitive. As the example, the learners corrected their mistakes by rereading the text (item 12) and if they could not understand a reading passage, they tried to analyze what difficulty they actually had (item 15). Then, kinesthetic learners sometimes tried to be aware of which words or grammar rules gave them the greatest trouble. In this way they could pay special attention to them while they read and practice (item 17). The results meant that the kinesthetic learners only used *evaluating* of metacognitive strategy. However, DePorter and Hernacky (1999) stated that the characteristics of kinesthetic learners such as like to write down or to take notes for visual review, prefer an actual practice and do some activities in class, and remember best by writing things down several times. Then, in learning reading, Reid (2005) stated that some people who are kinesthetic learners prefer to learn by moving and doing. They prefer interactive learning, learning through practical challenges and hands-on experience and taking in information as they move from one place to another. Kinesthetic learners are

therefore not comfortable sitting in a place for long. Therefore, kinesthetic learners used metacognitive strategy less frequently than social strategy. They could learn better through involving in the discussion or doing the real activities. As result, they rarely used *planning*, *managing* or *monitoring* while learning reading.

In conclusion, learning styles are useful for overcoming problem in learning process, unfortunately both of teachers and learners lack of awareness about the importance identifying learning styles, whether they were visual, auditory, or kinesthetic learners. The teacher sometimes has not known yet about learners' need and their differences of how learners learn. In addition, learners with different learning styles have different strategies in learning reading. They sometimes use cognitive, metacognitive, or social strategy. The characteristics of each style would decide their preferences in using learning strategies in learning reading. In the other words, the learners' styles correlated to their preferences of learning strategies. The researcher hopes by identifying learning styles and learning strategies used by the learners, the teacher and the students will be more enthusiastic and motivated for improving their English skill, especially in reading, and helping them to raise their confidence to face the learning problem.

## CONCLUSION

There are three types of learning styles which the learners belonged to in learning English as a foreign language at the first grade of SMAN 3 Bandar Lampung. It could be seen from the previous discussion that there are found the learners prefer

to be actively engaged in class activities or they belonged into kinesthetic learners with the result of 15 kinesthetic learners (46,88%). Besides, there were 9 visual learners (28,12%) and 8 auditory learners (25%). The learners with different styles have different characteristics and behaviors. The visual learners, who usually assimilate information most effectively by reading or seeing something, prefer information to be presented use of visual aids, require explanations of diagram, graphs, or visual directions, and they like to read a lot. However, auditory learners, who usually process information through sound, learn by listening to others, and learn by talking and hearing themselves, may remember information by reading aloud when they are learning new material. Then, they benefit from hearing audio tapes, lectures, and class discussions. In addition, kinesthetic learners need to be actively (bodily) engaged in the learning process with real world activities and with activities that have meaning to the learner. They remember information well when they actively participate in discussion in the classroom. Then, a combination of stimulated, for example an audiotape combined with an activity or a written direction combined with an activity, will help them understand new materials.

The visual, auditory and kinesthetic learners used different types of reading learning strategies as EFL at the first grade of SMAN 3 Bandar Lampung. Visual learners was mostly used cognitive strategy in learning reading as EFL. Besides, kinesthetic and auditory learners mostly used social strategy in learning reading as EFL. In addition, in learning reading, the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners used metacognitive strategy as the second strategy which chosen. The visual

learners used the four steps of metacognitive strategy, *planning*, *managing*, *monitoring*, and *evaluating* in learning English reading. However, the auditory learners only used *monitoring* and *evaluating* in metacognitive strategy. Then, kinesthetic learners only used *evaluating* in metacognitive strategy. In the other words, auditory and kinesthetic learners only used some strategies of metacognitive which appropriate to their learning style.

## REFERENCES

- DePorter, B & Hernacky, M. 1999. *Quantum Learning*. Bandung: Penerbit Kaifa
- Feinstein, S. 2006. *The Praeger Handbook of Learning and the Brain*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers
- Leaver, B. L., 1998. *Teaching the Whole Class*. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company
- Reid, G. 2005. *Learning Styles and Inclusion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Setiyadi, Ag. B. 2011. *English Learning Strategies in an EFL Setting in Indonesia*. Jakarta: Halaman Moeka
- Stratton, P., Hays, N. 1988. *A Student's Dictionary of Psychology*. London: Edward Arnold
- Wenden, A., Rubin, J. 1990. *Learning Strategies in Language Learning*, London Prentice Hall, and Int